

Andrew Jackson to John Coffee, December 12, 1813, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO JOHN COFFEE.

Fort Strother December 12 1813

D'r Sir: I have the pleasure to inform you that Genls Cocke and White has Joined me to day with 1450, of as fine looking Troops, as you ever saw. They are fine materials. I must move on, the enemy is concentrating within forty miles of Talladega. It would be treating the Holsten Troops, who I know are brave, impolitely, not to give them a fandango, before the time of service of part of them expires. You must form a Junction with me on the 16th. instant during the day or night. I mean to give the Holston brave fellows the fandango, on the 18th instant If I can reach the point. This for yourself but you must if Practicable reach me on the 16th and bring on with you as many days bread stuff as you can, say Eight days, we have a bountifull supply of Beef and pork, and expect after Genl Cocke a further supply of one hundred and odd Beves. I shall (if the Bread stuff expected down the river from Fort armstrong) should arive I shall commence crossing the Coosa, on the 14th., and form an encampment on the south bank, ready to move forward as soon as you form a Junction with me. The Volunteer Infantry I have permitted or reither¹ in the morning, I Issue an order, to permit them to return to Nashville there to be subject to the orders of the Governor, or the President of the united states, and have ordered Genl Hall to march them to that place. I have been induced to do this, to save them from disgrace or slaughter, as I have been informed by Genl Hall that both officers and men had in a final caucus [made a] determination not to cross the river and I have been ordered by Genl Pinckney to forward a detachment to cooperate with Genl adams of Georgia. If I gave an order, the Vollunteers must form part of this detachment, If a disobedience was attempted—death by a court

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martial, for mutiny, or by compulsion must be the result. Therefore to save them from disgrace, I have hazarded the Permission to return to Tennessee. But if they can meet the frowns of their country for abandoning the service when they know from information that the enemy are concentrated withing fifty miles from us, when the[y] from the report of the friendly creeks that the advance of the Georgia army are defeated, if they can return home, with me they could be of no use or service. Men with such gloomy feelings could not fight, and calculating on numbers, men who were not lost to patriotism or feeling might be destroyed depending on their prowess, nay more their, present example, would ruin any army and create actual mutiny in any new troops. let me hear from you. send on one of Capt David Smiths sons. Yrs sincerely

1 This form of *rather* was once frequently encountered in the South.